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ABSTRACT

In January 1990, there were no Pharmacy Technician (PT) programs in Iowa. To determine the need for a PT program in the Eastern Iowa Community College District, a survey was conducted of 958 pharmacy-related businesses in Iowa and the Quad Cities of Illinois believed to be employing PT's. The survey gathered information on personnel employed; minimum education sought for entry-level PT's; difficulty finding qualified PT's; and projected employee interest in a PT program. Study findings, based on a 55% response rate (N=526, of which 97% were Iowa-based), included the following: (1) 47% of the respondents represented pharmacies in retail stores, 26% stand-alone pharmacies, and 17% hospitals; (2) 76% of the respondents employed only 1 or 2 registered pharmacists; (3) among the 336 respondents employing PT's, 69% employed less than 3; (4) among respondents who employed or would employ PT's, 84% required only a high school diploma for entry-level PT's, though several respondents indicated that the low requirements were due to the lack of a PT program; (5) respondents indicated a total of 237 full-time and 336 part-time openings for PT's from January 1990 through 1992; (6) 197 respondents estimated that at total of 524 employees within their facilities would be interested in enrolling in PT programs; and (7) projections for 110 local PT job openings in 1992 and the interest of 76 employers in a PT program substantiated the need for a PT program at the college. Data tables and the survey instrument are included. (PAA)

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LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT OF PHARMACY TECHNICIANS FOR THE EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
DISTRICT OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND PLANNING

MARCH 1990

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction.....	1
II. The Study.....	1
Target Population.....	1
Data Collection, Tabulation and Analysis.....	1
Survey Design.....	2
III. Survey Results: State of Iowa and Illinois Quad Cities.....	2
IV. Survey Results: Merged Area IX and the Illinois Quad Cities.....	10
Summary and Conclusions.....	18
Summary and Conclusions of the Pharmacy Technician Labor Market Assessment: State of Iowa and Illinois Quad Cities.....	19
Summary and Conclusions of the Pharmacy Technician Technology Labor Market Assessment for Merged Area IX and the Illinois Quad Cities.....	21
Appendix A - The Survey Instrument.....	23

LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT OF
PHARMACY TECHNICIANS FOR THE
EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

I. INTRODUCTION

This labor market assessment was conducted to determine if there is a need for a Pharmacy Technician program.

According to the professional journals, there is an increasing demand for pharmacy technicians. Comments from local employers also indicated a need for trained pharmacy technicians to meet the demands of the local job market. Based on these studies and comments, a survey instrument was designed to collect information regarding employment projections and educational needs for pharmacy technicians in Area IX. As a result of discussions with the Iowa Department of Education officials, and the Community College State Vocational Technical Program Directors, it was determined that the Eastern Iowa Community College District (EICCD) would conduct a statewide survey to determine a need for programs. There is currently no program to educate Pharmacy Technicians/Assistants in Iowa.

II. THE STUDY

Target Population. A total of 958 pharmacy-related businesses within the state of Iowa and Illinois Quad Cities were identified that were believed to be employing pharmacy technicians. These businesses included hospitals, pharmacies in retail stores, stand alone pharmacies, nursing homes, mail order pharmacies and home health care providers.

Data Collection, Tabulation and Analysis. The survey was mailed on December 5, 1989 to 958 pharmacy-related businesses in the state of Iowa and the Illinois Quad Cities area. A cover letter and return envelope accompanied the survey. A second copy of the survey was mailed on January 4, 1990, to those who did not respond before the stated deadline. A total of 526 surveys were returned; this represents 55% of the total population polled. All of the responses were considered valid.

All surveys were tabulated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The survey instrument requested information on the following:

Survey Design

1. Personnel data regarding the number of pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy-related personnel;
2. Required and preferred minimum educational level of an entry-level pharmacy technician;
3. The entry-level hourly salary range for pharmacy technicians;
4. Immediate and projected job openings for pharmacy technicians;
5. Difficulty in finding qualified full and part-time pharmacy technicians;
6. Employees interested in a pharmacy technician program;

The survey instrument is given in Appendix A.

III. SURVEY RESULTS: STATE OF IOWA AND ILLINOIS QUAD CITIES

Distribution of Responses. The 526 respondents represented both Iowa and Illinois pharmacy-related businesses. The distribution of responses are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of Responses

<u>State</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Iowa	511	97
Illinois	10	2
Unknown	5	1
Totals	526	100

Type of Organization. The respondents were from a variety of organizational settings. 248 (47%) of respondents were pharmacies in retail stores. 139 (26%) of the respondents were from stand alone pharmacies and 88 (17%) were in hospitals. Responses in the "Other" category included mainly pharmacies located in medical clinics. For complete results see Table 2.

Table 2
Type of Organization

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Hospital	88	17
Pharmacy in Retail Store	248	47
Stand Alone Pharmacy	139	26
Nursing Home	4	1
Mail Order	1	<1
Home Health Care Provider	4	1
Other	41	8
No Response	1	<1
Totals	526	100

Number of Pharmacy-Related Personnel. The respondents were asked to indicate the number of pharmacy-related personnel in their facility. Various size categories were listed. Almost three quarters (74%) of the pharmacies responding employ four or less pharmacy personnel. 8% employ more than nine pharmacy-related employees. For complete results see Table 3.

Table 3
Number of Pharmacy-Related Personnel

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1-4	389	74
5-9	96	18
10-19	23	5
20-49	15	3
50+	2	<1
No Response	1	<1
Totals	526	100

Number of Registered Pharmacists. 76% of the respondents employ only one or two registered pharmacists. Only 3% of the respondents employed more than eight registered pharmacists. For complete results see Table 4.

Table 4
Number of Registered Pharmacists

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1	179	34
2	220	42
3-4	94	18
5-6	15	3
7-8	2	<1
9+	15	3
No Response	1	<1
Totals	<u>526</u>	<u>100</u>

Number of Pharmacy Technicians. 233 (44%) of the 526 respondents employ 1-2 pharmacy technicians; 12 (2%) employ 11 or more pharmacy technicians. These data are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5
Number of Pharmacy Technicians

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0	190	36
1-2	233	44
3-4	67	13
5-6	12	2
7-8	5	1
9-10	5	1
11+	12	2
No Response	2	1
Totals	<u>526</u>	<u>100</u>

Of the 336 respondents employing pharmacy technicians, 233 (69%) employ 1-2 technicians. Only 4% of respondents who employ pharmacy technicians employ more than ten technicians. For complete results see Table 6.

Table 6
Number of Pharmacy Technicians Currently Employed by Respondents

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1-2	233	69
3-4	67	20
5-6	12	4
7-8	5	1
9-10	5	1
11+	12	4
No Response	2	<1
Totals	<u>336</u>	<u>100</u>

The following tables represent the responses of those who currently employ pharmacy technicians as well as those who would like to employ technicians in the near future.

Minimum Education Required. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 84% require a high school diploma as the minimum education requirement for an entry-level pharmacy technician. For complete results see Table 7.

Table 7
Minimum Education Required

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than a High School Diploma	19	5
High School Diploma	313	84
One-Year Post-Secondary Diploma	16	4
Two-Year Associate Degree	6	2
Four-Year Bachelor's Degree	0	0
More than a Four Year Degree	0	0
Other	17	5
No Response	1	<1
Totals	<u>372</u>	<u>100</u>

Minimum Education Preferred. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 54% prefer a high school education as the minimum education. 39% of the respondents prefer either a one-year post-secondary diploma or an Associate degree for an entry-level pharmacy technician. There is a notable preference for a higher educational level; several respondents indicated that their requirements are low because no programs are available for pharmacy technicians. The complete results are listed in Table 8.

Table 8
Minimum Education Preferred

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than a High School Diploma	2	1
High School Diploma	203	54
One-Year Post-Secondary Diploma	92	25
Two-Year Associate Degree	51	14
Four-Year Bachelor's Degree	5	1
More than a Four Year Degree	0	0
Other	16	4
No Response	3	1
Totals	372	100

Work Experience Required. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 65% require no previous work experience. 28% require 1-2 years of work experience. The complete results are listed in Table 9.

Table 9
Work Experience Required

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	243	65
Less than One Year	51	14
One to Two Years	54	14
More than Two Years	17	5
No Response	7	2
Totals	372	100

Entry-Level Hourly Wage Range. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, the majority (74%) of the respondents pay an entry-level hourly wage between the \$4.00-\$5.99 range. 10% pay entry-level pharmacy technicians less than \$4.00 per hour. For complete results see Table 10.

Table 10
Entry-Level Hourly Wage Range

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Below \$4.00 per hour	39	10
\$ 4.00 - \$ 4.99 per hour	171	46
\$ 5.00 - \$ 5.99 per hour	103	28
\$ 6.00 - \$ 6.99 per hour	30	8
\$ 7.00 - \$ 7.99 per hour	14	4
Above \$ 8.00 per hour	3	1
No Response	12	3
Totals	372	100

Employment Projections. The respondents indicated a total of 237 full-time and 336 part-time openings for pharmacy technicians from January 1990 through 1992.

Table 11
Employment Projections for
Pharmacy Technicians

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>	<u>Total</u>
Immediate Openings	30	37	67
Projected Openings in 1990	76	140	216
Projected Openings in 1991	65	90	155
Projected Openings in 1992	66	69	135
Totals	237	336	573

Difficulty in Finding Qualified Pharmacy Technicians. 234 (45%) of the respondents have not attempted to recruit pharmacy technicians. 126 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding full-time pharmacy technicians. 141 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding part-time pharmacy technicians.

Employee Interest in Pharmacy Technician Program. 197 respondents estimated that a total of 524 employees within their facilities would be interested in enrolling in a pharmacy technician program.

Format of Classes. The respondents were asked to indicate the format(s) of training which they prefer for their employees: 29% preferred in-house training, 23% preferred evening classes, and another 23% preferred one-day seminars. The complete results are provided in Table 12.

Table 12
Format of Classes

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Morning Classes	27	5
Afternoon Classes	9	2
Evening Classes	120	23
Wednesday Classes	15	3
One-day Seminars	116	22
Multiple Day Seminars	60	11
In-house Training	151	29
Credit Courses	68	13
Noncredit Courses	16	3
Other	38	7

Provide Worksite Facility. All 526 respondents were asked if they would be interested in having a student from a pharmacy technician program come to their facility for work experience: 89 (36%) responded yes.

Specific Training. Specific training or coursework most frequently cited by the respondents include:

- Computer Usage
- Typing
- Medical Terminology
- Pharmacy Law--Regulations
- Math--Calculations
- Unit Dose
- Metric System
- 3rd Party Insurance
- Communication Skills--Customer Relations
- Science Background
- Basic Pharmacology
- Sterile Technique
- Bookkeeping

General Comments Written by Respondents.

"Believe a structured program is essential!"

"I would hope that if such a program were developed close working with the Colleges or Pharmacy, Board of Pharmacy, and the Iowa Pharmacists Association would occur. This tends to be a rather sensitive area as far as practicing pharmacists are concerned."

"I would hope any program of this nature could be implemented in concert with the Iowa Pharmacist Association so we don't have 10 different community colleges offering 10 different programs."

"I think that training techs in an educational setting is a wonderful idea. I hope employers would take advantage of the program in lieu of training their own."

"Need is increasing due to smaller shops closing."

"Your efforts are to be encouraged and we hope to be able to cooperate; good luck!"

"We need more pharmacists not technicians."

"My major problem with techs is after awhile most of them tend to become over confident--they will try to counsel patients and I have to constantly remind them to refer any medical questions to me. I don't believe a technician program should deal with medication or diseases--this would just compound the problem we already have."

"I think a tech program is a good idea without sounding like a snob I would like to say that the program should include what a tech cannot do in an Rx department."

"My answers may indicate a negative response. I do not mean it as such. Pharmacy techs are here to stay and should be well trained, either on the job or in an educational unit. The better trained the more efficient."

"I trained my tech from scratch--it's a long process! I had time then but when I have to replace her I won't!"

"Pharmacy techs should also be registered with the Board of Pharmacy and be required to update their license. They do need a license."

"Technician training has been a big problem in pharmacy. We look forward to you getting this class started."

IV. SURVEY RESULTS: MERGED AREA IX
AND ILLINOIS QUAD CITIES

Distribution of Responses. 65 respondents represented both Merged Area IX and Illinois Quad Cities pharmacy-related businesses. The distribution of responses are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of Responses

<u>State</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Iowa	55	85
Illinois	10	15
Totals	65	100

Type of Organization. The respondents were from a variety of organizational settings. 31 (48%) of the respondents are pharmacies in retail stores. 24% of the respondents are from stand alone pharmacies and 11% are in hospitals. Responses in the "Other" category include mainly pharmacies located in medical clinics. For complete results see Table 2.

Table 2
Type of Organization

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Hospital	7	11
Pharmacy in Retail Store	31	48
Stand Alone Pharmacy	15	24
Nursing Home	1	1
Mail Order	1	1
Home Health Care Provider	1	1
Other	9	14
No Response	1	<1
Totals	65	100

Number of Pharmacy-Related Personnel. The respondents were asked to indicate the number of pharmacy-related personnel in their facility. Various size categories were listed. Almost three quarters (72%) of the pharmacies responding employ four or less pharmacy personnel. 11% employ more than nine pharmacy-related employees. For complete results see Table 3.

Table 3
Number of Pharmacy-Related Personnel

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1-4	47	72
5-9	11	17
10-19	3	5
20-49	4	6
50+	0	0
Totals	<u>65</u>	<u>100</u>

Number of Registered Pharmacists. Over two-thirds (68%) of the respondents employ only one or two registered pharmacists. Only three percent (3%) of the respondents employ more than eight registered pharmacists. For complete results see Table 4.

Table 4
Number of Registered Pharmacists

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1	19	29
2	25	39
3-4	15	23
5-6	3	5
7-8	1	1
9+	2	3
Totals	<u>65</u>	<u>100</u>

Number of Pharmacy Technicians. 66% of the respondents currently employ pharmacy technicians; 3% employ 11 or or more pharmacy technicians. See Table 5.

Table 5
Number of Pharmacy Technicians

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0	22	34
1-2	26	40
3-4	10	15
5-6	1	1
7-8	1	1
9-10	2	3
11+	3	5
Totals	<u>65</u>	<u>100</u>

Of the 43 respondents employing pharmacy technicians, 26 (61%) employ 1-2; seven percent employ more than ten technicians. For complete results see Table 6.

Table 6
Number of Pharmacy Technicians Currently Employed by Respondents

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1-2	26	61
3-4	10	23
5-6	1	2
7-8	1	2
9-10	2	5
11+	3	7
Totals	<u>43</u>	<u>100</u>

The following tables represent the responses of those who currently employ pharmacy technicians as well as those who would like to employ technicians in the near future.

Minimum Education Required. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, an overwhelming 90% require a high school diploma as minimum education requirement for an entry-level pharmacy technician. Only 2% require a one-year post-secondary program. For complete results see Table 7.

Table 7
Minimum Education Required

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than a High School Diploma	2	4
High School Diploma	44	90
One-Year Post-Secondary Diploma	1	2
Two-Year Associate Degree	0	0
Four-Year Bachelor's Degree	0	0
More than a Four Year Degree	0	0
Other	2	4
Totals	49	100

Minimum Education Preferred. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 66% prefer a high school diploma as the minimum education requirement. 34% of the respondents preferred at least a one-year post secondary program for an entry-level pharmacy technician. There is a notable preference for a higher educational level as opposed to the current educational level required. The complete results are listed in Table 8.

Table 8
Minimum Education Preferred

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than a High School Diploma	0	0
High School Diploma	33	67
One-Year Post-Secondary Diploma or	13	27
Two-Year Associate Degree	2	4
Four-Year Bachelor's Degree	1	2
More than a Four Year Degree	0	0
Other	0	0
Totals	49	100

Work Experience Required. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 53% require no previous work experience. The complete results are listed in Table 9.

Table 9
Work Experience Required

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	26	53
Less than One Year	9	19
One to Two Years	10	20
More than Two Years	2	4
No Response	2	4
Totals	49	100

Entry-Level Hourly Wage Range. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, the majority (78%) of the respondents pay an entry-level hourly wage between the \$4.00-\$5.99 range. 6% pay entry-level pharmacy technicians less than \$4.00 per hour. For complete results see Table 10.

Table 10
Entry-Level Hourly Wage Range

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Below \$4.00 per hour	3	6
\$ 4.00 - \$ 4.99 per hour	24	49
\$ 5.00 - \$ 5.99 per hour	14	29
\$ 6.00 - \$ 6.99 per hour	4	8
\$ 7.00 - \$ 7.99 per hour	0	0
Above \$ 8.00 per hour	1	2
No Response	3	6
Totals	49	100

Employment Projections. The respondents indicated a total of 41 full-time and 69 part-time openings for pharmacy technicians from January 1990 through 1992.

Table 11
Employment Projections for
Pharmacy Technicians

<u>Positions</u>	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>	<u>Total</u>
Immediate Openings	8	8	16
Projected Openings in 1990	13	28	41
Projected Openings in 1991	10	19	29
Projected Openings in 1992	10	14	24
Totals	41	69	110

Difficulty in Finding Qualified Pharmacy Technicians. Twenty-four (31%) of the respondents have not attempted to recruit pharmacy technicians. 20 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding full-time pharmacy technicians. 28 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding part-time pharmacy technicians.

Employee Interest in Pharmacy Technician Program. 28 respondents estimated that a total of 76 employees within their facility would be interested in a pharmacy technician program.

Send to Eastern Iowa Community College. The respondents were asked to indicate if they would send their employees to Scott, Clinton, or Muscatine Community College for training in a pharmacy technician program: 22% indicated yes, they would send their employees. For complete results see Table 12.

Table 12
Send to Eastern Iowa Community College District
For Training in Pharmacy Technology

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	14	22
No	15	23
Uncertain	34	52
No response	2	3
Totals	65	100

Format of Classes. The respondents were asked to indicate the format(s) of training which they prefer for their employees: 42% prefer evening classes, 25% prefer one-day seminars and another 25% prefer in-house training. The complete results are provided in Table 13.

Table 13
Format of Classes

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Morning Classes	7	11
Afternoon Classes	1	2
Evening Classes	27	42
Wednesday Classes	4	6
One-day Seminars	16	25
Multiple Day Seminars	5	8
In-house Training	16	25
Credit Courses	8	12
Noncredit Courses	2	3
Other	7	11

Provide Worksite Facility. All respondents were asked if they would be interested in having a student from a pharmacy technician program come to their facility for work experience: 36 (55%) responded yes. For complete results see Table 14.

Table 14
Provide Worksite Facility

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	36	55
No	26	40
No Response	3	5
Totals	65	100

Specific Training. Specific training needs most frequently cited by the respondents include:

- Computer Usage
- Typing
- Medical Terminology
- Pharmacy Law--Regulations
- Math--Calculations
- Unit Dose
- Metric System
- 3rd Party Insurance
- Communication Skills--Customer Relations
- Science Background
- Basic Pharmacology
- Sterile Technique
- Bookkeeping

General Comments Written by Respondents.

"If possible, I would appreciate the results of this survey forwarded to my attention. The pharmacy technician plays a very important role in the daily routines of the practicing pharmacist. I have found that the job becomes what the person (i.e. technician) makes it. Results from a recent survey I conducted in the Quad City Area (3/89) shows that technicians are underpaid for the jobs that they do. Thank you for the interest in the aspect of pharmacy."

"At all pharmacy meetings of the House of Delegates (Association) the majority have voted to train their own technicians and not have formal training. With formal training, the techs want more money and the state wants to license them!"

"I would welcome a certificate program to help give entry-level persons some background on what can be expected, but there is still a wide variation between job settings and experience. After being hired it would still be necessary for on-the-job training before a technician would be fully effective. Currently I'm not sure my technicians would benefit from a certification program either from a knowledge stand point or a wage perspective. They each have over 10 years experience and that is my number 1 criteria in helping me judge their knowledge and performance."

"I strongly suggest careful and well planned interaction with the profession of pharmacy, the Iowa and Illinois Pharmacies Association in consideration of a valid and viable program."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
OF THE
PHARMACY TECHNICIAN
LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
OF THE
PHARMACY TECHNICIAN
LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT:
STATE OF IOWA AND ILLINOIS QUAD CITIES

In January 1990, a survey was conducted of 958 pharmacy-related businesses in the Iowa and the Illinois Quad Cities that were believed to be employing pharmacy technicians. These businesses included hospitals, pharmacies in retail stores, stand alone pharmacies, nursing homes, mail order pharmacies and home health care providers. A total of 526 surveys were returned; this represents 55% of the total population polled. All of the responses were considered valid for the purposes of this survey. This report summarizes the highlights of the survey results.

Highlights

There are no pharmacy technician programs currently within the state of Iowa.

1. The respondents were from a variety of organizational settings. 47% of the respondents are pharmacies in retail stores. 26% of the respondents are from stand alone pharmacies and 17% are in hospitals. Responses in the "Other" category included mainly pharmacies located in medical clinics.
2. Almost three quarters (74%) of the pharmacies responding employ four or less pharmacy personnel. 8% employ more than nine pharmacy-related employees.
3. 76% of the respondents employ only one or two registered pharmacists. Only 3% of the correspondents employ more than eight registered pharmacists.
4. 233 (44%) of the respondents employ 1-2 pharmacy technicians; 12 (2%) employ 11 or more pharmacy technicians.
5. Of the 336 respondents employing pharmacy technicians, 233 (69%) employ less than three technicians. Only 4% of the respondents who employ pharmacy technicians employ more than ten technicians.
6. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 84% require a high school diploma as the minimum education requirement for an entry-level pharmacy technician. When asked their preference, only 54% would request a minimum education of a high school diploma. 40% of the respondents prefer either a one-year post secondary diploma or an Associate degree for an entry-level pharmacy technician. There is a notable preference for a higher level educational level; several respondents indicated that their requirements are low because no programs are available for pharmacy technicians.
7. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 65% require no previous work experience; 28% require 1-2 years of work experience.

8. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 74% pay an entry-level hourly wage between the \$4.00-\$5.99 range. 10% pay entry-level pharmacy technicians less than \$4.00 per hour.
9. The respondents indicated a total of 237 full-time and 336 part-time openings for pharmacy technicians from January 1990 through 1992.
10. 234 (45%) of the respondents have not attempted to recruit pharmacy technicians. 126 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding full-time technicians and 141 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding part-time pharmacy technicians.
11. 197 respondents estimated that a total of 524 employees within their facilities would be interested in enrolling in a pharmacy technician program.
12. The respondents were asked to indicate the format(s) of training which they prefer for their employees: 29% preferred in-house training, 23% preferred evening classes, and another 23% preferred one-day seminars.
13. All 526 respondents were asked if they would be interested in having a student from a pharmacy technician program come to their facility for work experience: 189 (36%) responded yes.
14. Specific training needs most frequently cited by the respondents include:
 - Computer Usage
 - Typing
 - Medical Terminology
 - Pharmacy Law--Regulations
 - Math--Calculations
 - Unit Dose
 - Metric System
 - 3rd Party Insurance
 - Communication Skills--Customer Relations
 - Science Background
 - Basic Pharmacology
 - Sterile Technique
 - Bookkeeping

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
OF THE
PHARMACY TECHNICIAN
LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT FOR
MERGED AREA IX AND THE ILLINOIS QUAD CITIES

In January 1990, a survey was conducted of 114 pharmacy-related businesses within Merged Area IX and the Illinois Quad Cities that were believed to be employing pharmacy technicians. The businesses included hospitals, pharmacies in retail stores, stand alone pharmacies, nursing homes, mail order pharmacies and home health care providers. Sixty-five surveys were returned. This report summarizes the highlights of the survey results.

Highlights

1. The respondents were from a variety of organizational settings. 48% of the respondents are pharmacies in retail stores. 24% are from stand alone pharmacies and 11% are in hospitals.
2. 72% of the pharmacies responding employ four or less pharmacy personnel. 11% employ more than nine pharmacy-related employees.
3. 68% of the respondents employ only one or two registered pharmacists. Only 3% of the respondents employ more than eight registered pharmacists.
4. 66% of the respondents currently employ pharmacy technicians; 5% employ 11 or more pharmacy technicians.
5. Of the 43 respondents employing pharmacy technicians, 26 (61%) employ 1-2 technicians; 3 (7%) of the respondents more than ten technicians.
6. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ technicians in the near future, an overwhelming 90% require a high school diploma as the minimum education requirement for an entry-level pharmacy technician. Only 2% require a one-year post secondary program. When asked their preference, 66% prefer a high school diploma as minimum education. 34% of the respondents prefer at least a one-year post secondary program for an entry-level pharmacy technician. There is a notable preference for a higher educational level as opposed to the current educational level required.
7. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, 53% require no previous work experience.

8. Of those respondents who employ or would like to employ pharmacy technicians in the near future, the majority (78%) of the respondents pay an entry-level wage between the \$4.00-\$5.99 range.
9. The respondents indicated a total of 41 full-time and 69 part-time openings for pharmacy technicians from January 1990 through 1992. 28 respondents estimated that a total of 76 employees within their facility would be interested in a pharmacy technician program.
10. The need for a pharmacy technician program is substantiated by the 110 openings projected through 1992 and the 76 employees cited by the respondents as interested in a pharmacy technician program. The new positions and retraining of current workers indicate a total of 186 potential students.
11. Twenty-four (31%) of the respondents have not attempted to recruit pharmacy technicians. 20 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding full-time technicians and 28 respondents indicated they had difficulty finding part-time pharmacy technicians.
12. The respondents were asked to indicate if they would send their employees to Scott, Clinton, or Muscatine Community College for training in a pharmacy technician program: over 22% indicated, yes they would send their employees.
13. The respondents were asked to indicate the format(s) of training which they prefer for their employees: 42% preferred evening classes, 25% preferred one-day seminars and another 25% preferred in-house training.
14. All respondents were asked if they would be interested in having a student from a pharmacy technician program come to their facility for work experience: 36 (55%) responded yes.
15. Specific training methods most frequently cited by the respondents include:
 - Computer Usage
 - Typing
 - Medical Terminology
 - Pharmacy Law--Regulations
 - Math--Calculations
 - Unit Dose
 - Metric System
 - 3rd Party Insurance
 - Communication Skills--Customer Relations
 - Science Background
 - Basic Pharmacology
 - Sterile Technique
 - Bookkeeping

APPENDIX A
THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT



EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

306 West River Drive • Davenport, Iowa • 52801-1221 • (319) 322-5015

PHARMACY TECHNICIAN SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to assist the Eastern Iowa Community College District in gathering information about employment trends and educational needs in the pharmacy technician field. Your responses will help provide direction to our future programming efforts. The names of firms and businesses replying will not be released. We appreciate the time you will take to complete this survey.

Please indicate your response by circling the number corresponding to your choice or by providing the information requested.

SECTION A -- GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Which of the following would best describe your organization?(select one)
 1. Hospital
 2. Pharmacy in a retail store
 3. Stand alone pharmacy
 4. Nursing Home
 5. Mail Order
 6. Home Health Care Provider
 7. Other _____

2. What is the total number of pharmacy-related personnel employed by your facility?
 1. 1 - 4
 2. 5 - 9
 3. 10 - 19
 4. 20 - 49
 5. 50 +

3. How many registered pharmacists does your facility employ?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3 - 4
4. 5 - 6
5. 7 - 8
6. 9 +

4. How many pharmacy technicians does your facility employ?

1. 0
2. 1 - 2
3. 3 - 4
4. 5 - 6
5. 7 - 8
6. 9 - 10
7. 11 +

SECTION B -- EDUCATION

5. What is the minimum educational level your organization requires for an entry level pharmacy technician?

1. Do not employ technicians
2. Less than a high school diploma
3. High school diploma
4. 1 year post secondary program
5. 2 year Associate degree
6. 4 year Bachelor's degree
7. More than a 4 year degree
8. Other (please specify) _____

6. What is the minimum educational level your organization prefers for an entry-level pharmacy technician?

1. Do not employ technicians
2. Less than a high school diploma
3. High school diploma
4. 1 year post secondary program
5. 2 year Associate degree
6. 4 year Bachelor's degree
7. More than a 4 year degree
8. Other (please specify) _____

7. How much previous work experience does your organization normally require of an entry-level pharmacy technician?

1. Do not employ technicians
2. None
3. Less than one year
4. One to two years
5. More than two years

SECTION C - EMPLOYMENT

8. What is the entry-level hourly salary range for a pharmacy technician at your facility?
1. Do not employ technicians
 2. Below \$4.00 per hour
 3. \$4.00 - \$4.99
 4. \$5.00 - \$5.99
 5. \$6.00 - \$6.99
 6. \$7.00 - \$7.99
 7. Above \$8.00 per hour
9. Please indicate the number of immediate and projected job openings you anticipate for entry-level pharmacy technicians at your facility.
- | | <u>Full-time</u> | <u>Part-time</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Immediate job openings | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Projected openings in 1990 | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Projected openings in 1991 | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Projected openings in 1992 | _____ | _____ |
10. Do you have difficulty finding qualified full-time pharmacy technicians?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Have not recruited pharmacy technicians
11. Do you have difficulty finding qualified part-time pharmacy technicians?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Have not recruited pharmacy technicians
12. Please estimate the total number of employees within your facility who you think would be interested in a pharmacy technician program. Indicate the number in the space provided. _____.
13. Would your facility send its employees to Scott, Clinton or Muscatine Community College for training in a pharmacy technician program?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Uncertain

14. What format(s) of training do you prefer for your employees? (Circle all that apply.)

1. Morning classes
2. Afternoon classes
3. Evening classes
4. Wednesday classes
5. One-day seminars
6. Multiple day seminars
7. In-house training
8. Credit courses
9. Noncredit courses
10. Other (please specify) _____

15. Would you be interested in having a student from a pharmacy technician program come to your facility for work experience?

1. Yes
2. No

16. What specific training do you see as essential for an entry-level pharmacy technician position?

17. We welcome your comments:

THANK YOU.
PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE.